

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Evgeniya Kuncheva Dimitrova, MD

Medical University - Pleven, Faculty of Health Care,

"Nursing Therapeutic Care" department

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree '**doctor**'

professional direction 7.4 "*Public health*"

scientific specialty "*Health Care Management*"

Author : Zhaneta Vasileva Stoyanova

Form of doctoral study: full-time form of study

Department: "Health care", Public health faculty, MU - Varna

Topic: MODERN ASPECTS OF PROVIDING SAFE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT IN
NURSING PRACTICE

Research supervisor: Prof. Sonya Toncheva, Dr. P.H.Sc.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

The presented set of materials is in accordance with the Regulations on the development of the academic staff of MU-Varna.

In 1989, Zhaneta Stoyanova finished her education as a nurse and started working as a nurse in the MPHAT - Varna at the MMA, and since 2001 until now she has been the head nurse in the same hospital. Since 2020, she has been enrolled as a full-time doctoral student in the Department of Health Care. Since 1999, the doctoral student has held a bachelor educational and qualification degree in "Health care management, since 2003 - a master EQD in public health, and since 2011 she has also acquired a master EQD in health care management at the Medical University of Varna. Zh. Stoyanova is also enrolled for specialization in Hospital Hygiene, Prevention and Control of Infections from 2021.

2. Relevance of the topic

The dissertation contains 147 pages and is illustrated with 47 figures, 34 tables and 5 appendices. The bibliographic list includes 260 literary sources, of which 66 are in Cyrillic, 194 are in Latin.

The dissertation work is very relevant, since safety in the field of health care is a priority issue on a global scale. There is evidence that risk factors exist in our healthcare system and opportunities are created for adverse consequences that can lead to varying degrees of health damage. These processes with undesirable consequences undermine the trust of patients in the healthcare system and increase their level of dissatisfaction among the public, but by improving the organization of work, most of them could be avoided.

3. Awareness of the problem

Zh. Stoyanova is familiar with the state of the problem in detail. The literature review made comprises 31 pages. In it the doctoral student presents a critical analysis of the available

literature, which examines the concepts related to providing a safe hospital environment and their elements by people (staff, patients, attendants), environment and processes of medical care. Asst. Stoyanova is familiar with the recommendations and directives related to the safety of hospital environment of the WHO, of the Council of the EU and with international initiatives in the field of patient safety and the hospital environment. The existing legislation of our country related to the problem under consideration was also examined. A retrospective analysis was made of the development of the problem of a safe hospital environment in the practice of nurses from the nursing theorist Florence Nightingale to the present day. From the critical analysis of the available literature on the problem, the doctoral student logically came to the conclusion that the provision of a safe hospital environment is a mandatory condition in nursing practice and an integral part of the overall concept of nursing.

4. Research methodology

The purpose of the research is formulated clearly and precisely. To achieve it, a sufficient number of specific tasks are set, which are arranged in chronological order.

The research methodology includes:

Sociological methods include:

- **Documentary method** - to clarify the essence of the role and functions of the nurse, regarding the activities in their practice, directly related to providing a safe hospital environment.
- **Survey method** - to collect, summarize and analyze information about opinions and evaluations through a direct, anonymous, individual survey provided for the study of: the opinion of **nurses**, about the possibilities of optimizing their participation in providing safe hospital environment in practice and for **patients**, about their judgment and attitudes about the process of providing safe hospital environment.
- **Semi-structured interview** - to explore the opinion of university lecturers regarding the possibilities of applying the nurse's competences acquired during basic training, as well as possibilities for optimizing the training process in the field of providing safe hospital environment.
- **In-depth interview** - to reflect the opinion of proven experts in hospital hygiene and in the field of providing safe hospital environment in nursing practice.

Statistical methods:

Data processing was performed using SPSS v. 19 for Windows and MS Excel 2019, with $p < 0.05$ as the level of significance of the results.

For the analysis and interpretation of data with a view to revealing the observed phenomena and their interdependencies, there were used – comparative analysis, mean value, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, median, percentiles, confidence interval, relative share, parametric and non-parametric analyses, correlation analysis.

The chosen research methodology allows achieving the set goal and obtaining an adequate answer to the tasks solved in the dissertation work.

5. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation on "Modern aspects of providing safe hospital environment in nursing practice" is structured according to the requirements for this type of scientific work.

In Chapter One "Literature Review", the doctoral student examines concepts of a safe hospital environment in nursing and the elements of the same in the practice of nurses. She emphasizes that providing safe hospital environment in nursing practice is still an undeveloped strategy in Bulgaria, for which a new vision is needed and an evidence-based

approach to the problem and the application of modern science-based methodology in real nursing practice.

In the second chapter "Aim, tasks and methodology of the research" the methodology of the conducted research is developed in detail, including the goal, tasks, hypotheses, formulation and stages of the research.

In Chapter Three "Results and Discussion" - The PhD student presents an analysis of theories in nursing in the context of the process of providing safe hospital environment in nursing practice and outlines the relationship of caring for the health and well-being of people and society with their surroundings and processes, which arise from it. After the detailed description of the studied groups of persons - nurses, patients, lecturers, experts, the doctoral student examines the awareness and level of preparation of nurses regarding the process of providing safe hospital environment in their practice and proves that they have a unique position to assist to optimize the process. More than half of all four groups of respondents believe that a nurse should be an active member of the team in the process of providing safe hospital environment, thus contributing to its effective course. The analysis of the data shows, that the groups of respondents participating in the study, in their majority, expressed an opinion about the need to optimize the process of providing safe hospital environment in the practice of nurses. Although nurses have the opinion that they apply in their practice optimal models to provide safe hospital environment, a large part of them (90.3%) express readiness to apply new models in their practice. The results unequivocally prove that the introduction of a new model is seen by most respondents as a continuous process of dialogue and support among nurses, their supervisors and university lecturers. Zh. Stoyanova also studies the difficulties encountered in the process of providing safe hospital environment and logically comes to the conclusion that nurses need additional training on the issue of a safe hospital environment. Of particular interest is the matter of whether patients feel in a safe hospital environment being applied nursing manipulations and care, to which 64% of patients respond positively. As a result of the analysis of the opinion of the studied groups of persons, regarding the importance and effectiveness of the process of providing safe hospital environment in nursing practices, it can be said that it is an important process and the role of nurses in it is significant, but there are reservations about its optimization, through training and introducing new models and practices.

In chapter four: "Practical approaches for optimizing the process of providing safe hospital environment with the participation of nurses", Zh. Stoyanova identifies 7 priority directions for optimizing the process of providing safe hospital environment. The presented Model for optimizing the process of providing safe hospital environment in the practice of nurses, represents a set of tools and activities performed in a certain sequence in order to optimize the process of management, control and evaluation of the safe hospital environment. It includes three components of good professional models: competencies, professional relationships and values. The model for optimizing the process of providing safe hospital environment corresponds to the National Health Strategy 2020 and the project to the National Health Strategy 2030 in the field of safety objectives. For the realization of the Model, the doctoral student offers the system approach, and for its complement, the pragmatic approach. The "Algorithm for applying new models and approaches for optimizing the process of providing safe hospital environment" adapted by Zh. Stoyanova is also of a practical focus, based on the belief that nurses must build competencies to consciously identify safety gaps or errors and

suggest opportunities for process improvement. The analysis of the expert evaluation of the proposed practical approaches to optimize nurses' participation in the process of providing safe hospital environment proves that this model is applicable in nursing practice and will contribute to increasing the quality of health care, professional comfort and safety of nurses at delivering patient care in a safe hospital environment.

Chapter Five "Conclusions, proposals and recommendations" - I agree with the 9 main conclusions drawn by the doctoral student at the end of the dissertation.

The recommendations made to the Ministry of Health, Medical Universities, BAHP and hospital managers are relevant and would increase the quality and effectiveness of the proposed measures to provide safe hospital environment.

I agree with the presented main contributions of the dissertation work of a theoretical-cognitive practical-applied nature.

6 . Assessment of the PhD student's publications and personal contributions

The doctoral student has presented 5 publications related to the dissertation work. The entire work of Zhaneta Stoyanova is proof of her ability to carry out independent scientific work. When developing her dissertation work, the doctoral student demonstrates awareness, purposefulness and impartiality in conducting the research and observing the principles of scientific ethics.

After a thorough analysis of the dissertation in question, I have no critical remarks about the doctoral student:

7. Abstract

The abstract is structured according to the requirements, contains 128 pages and reflects the main results achieved in the dissertation.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB and the Regulations of the MU - Varna. The presented materials and dissertation results fully correspond to the specific requirements adopted in connection with the Regulations of the MU – Pleven for the application of the LDASRB.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Zhaneta Vasileva Stoyanova possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty "Health Care Management", demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

In view of the above, I confidently give my **positive assessment** of the conducted research, presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and **offer to the honorable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"** to Zhaneta Vasileva Stoyanova, a doctoral student in the doctoral program in " Health Care Management".

04/03/2023

Opinion prepared by:



(Assoc. Prof. E. Dimitrova, MD)